

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 301251Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7569

INFO COMUSMACTHAI BANGKOK

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 2092

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJ: ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS

REF: BANGKOK 921

SUMMARY. SPECULATION THAT ELECTIONS WILL NOT BE HELD HAS SUBSIDED. SOCIAL ACTION PARTY RELEASES PARTIAL LIST OF CANDIDATES. EMBASSY HAS INDICATIONS NOT ALL SAP MEMBERS HAPPY ABOUT NEW SAP MEMBERS RECRUITED FROM OTHER PARTIES. ARCHDUKE OTTO VON HAPSBURG CONFERS WITH PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT ON POLITICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IN THAILAND. FORMER ACM THAWI CHUNLASAP WILL RUN IN MAE HONG SON PROVINCE. DEMOCRATS SPLIT OVER ACCEPTING FORMER POL. MG SANGA KITTIKHACHON, BROTHER OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER THANOM INTO PARTY. END SUMMARY.

1. SPECULATION IN THAI POLITICAL CIRCLES THAT FORTHCOMING ELECTION WILL NOT TAKE PLACE HAS GENERALLY SUBSIDED, ALTHOUGH SOME SOURCES CONTINUE TO SPECULATE THAT SOME UNNAMED EMERGENCY BETWEEN NOW AND APRIL 4 MIGHT POSSIBLE REQUIRE A POSTPONEMENT. PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT CATEGORICALLY  
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STATED THAT ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD (SEE REFTEL).  
CONVERSATIONS THAT DAO AND MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF HAVE

HAD WITH HIGH RANKING MILITARY OFFICERS OVER PAST FEW DAYS CONFIRM REPORTS THAT THEY EXPECT ELECTIONS TO BE HELD. ALL POLITICIANS WITH WHOM POLITICAL OFFICERS HAVE SPOKEN WITHIN THE LAST THREE WEEKS BELIEVE ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD AND ARE PREPARING FOR THE UPCOMING ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

2. THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY (SAP) BECAME THE FIRST PARTY TO RELEASE A PARTIAL LIST OF ITS CANDIDATES FOR THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS, NAMING SOME OF ITS ELECTORAL TEAM ON JANUARY 29. AMONG THE PROMINENT POLITICIANS RECRUITED FROM OTHER PARTIES ARE BUNLOET LOETPRICHA, DEPUTY INTERIOR MINISTER AND FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY (SJP); SURIN THEPKANCHANA, INDUSTRY MINISTER AND FORMER DEPUTY PARTY LEADER OF THE SJP; CHARUN KUWANON, GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN AND FORMER MEMBER OF THE SOCIAL NATIONALIST PARTY (SNP); NIYOM WORAPANYA, FORMER MEMBER OF THE SNP; AND ANAN RUANGKUN, FORMER SJP MEMBER. THE RELEASE OF ONLY A PARTIAL LIST OF SAP CANDIDATES SEEMS TO CONFIRM WHAT PRAWIT SITHANYARAT, FORMER SECRETARY TO THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND SAP MP FROM UBON, TOLD EMBOFFS ON JANUARY 29. HE SAID THAT THE "OLD SAP MP" FROM THE NORTHEAST WERE VERY UPSET BY SAP'S DECISION TO ALL CHAISIRI RUANGKANCHANASET, PEOPLE'S JUSTICE EX-MP FROM UBON, WITH A NOTORIOUS BUSINESS AND POLITICAL REPUTATION, TO BUY HIS WAY INTO THE PARTY FOR A REPORTED CONTRIBUTION OF TEN MILLION BAHT. PRAWIT ALSO SAID THAT THAI NATION (TN) AND SAP CANDIDATES WOULD BE ABLE TO WORK TOGETHER IN SOME AREAS, IN BANGKOK, FOR EXAMPLE, BUT HE DID NOT THINK THAT THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO WORK TOGETHER IN THE NORTHEAST.

3. ACCORDING TO AN ARTICLE IN THE NATION OF JANUARY 30, PM KHUKRIT SEEMS TO BE PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS IN ORDER TO ASSURE THAT HE WILL CONTINUE TO BE THE PRIME MINISTER AFTER TGE APRIL 4 ELECTIONS. HE HAS MET SEVERAL TIMES IN BANGKOK WITH OTTO VON HAPSBURG, ARCHDUKE OF AUSTRIA, WHO IS AN ADVISOR ON INTERNATIONAL  
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RELATIONS FOR THE HANNS SEIDEL STIFTUNG, A POLITICAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION IN WEST GERMANY CONNECTED WITH THE CHRISTIAN SOCIAL UNION PARTY. THE ARCHDUKE IS IN BANKOK WITH SIGEFRIED LENGEL, A MEMBER OF THE FOUNDATION AND A HIGH OFFICIAL OF THE BAVARIAN STATE GOVERNMENT, TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A POLITICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR THE THAIS.

4. FORMER AIR CHIEF MARSHAL THAWI CHUNLASAP WILL DEFINITELY RUN FOR A SEAT IN MAE HONG SON, THE

NORTHERNMOST PROVINCE. THE PROVINCE HAS ONLY ONE SEAT IN PARLIAMENT, WHICH WAS MOST RECENTLY HELD BY A NEW FORCE PARTY MEMBER.

5. THE DEMOCRAT PARTY IS CLEARLY SPLIT OVER THE ACCEPTANCE OF FORMER POL MAJOR GENERAL SANGA KITTIKHACHOC, BROTHER OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER THANOM KITTIKHACHON, INTO THE PARTY. DR. DAMON SOMWICHIAN, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PARTY, TOLD EMBOFFS ON JANUARY 20 THAT THE DEMOCRATS WOULD DEFINITELY NOT ACCEPT SANGA INTO THE PARTY AT THIS TIME BECAUSE HE WAS A KITTIKHACHON. SINGTO CHANTRAKUN, DEMOCRAT MP FROM BANGKOK TOLD EMBASSY OFFICERS ON JANUARY 24 THAT THE PARTY WOULD PROBABLY ACCEPT SANGA. THE BANGKOK POST OF JANUARY 29 REPORTED THAT THE DEMOCRATS HAD VOTED ON JANUARY 27 NOT TO ACCEPT SANGA. IN A JANUARY 30 ARTICLE THE NATION REPORTED THAT SANGA WOULD RUN UNDER THE DEMOCRAT PARTY BANNER IN LAMPHUN. ISSUE OF SANGA'S AFFILIATION WITH THE DOMOCRATS APPEARS STILL UNSETTLED.  
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